



NEWS RELEASE

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DROUGHT MAY LINGER BUT ELEVEN RESIDENCES WILL HAVE WATER THANKS TO USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

North Platte, Neb., June 29, 2004—The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development announced today the awarding of nearly \$333,000 in grant funds to the City of Cambridge. The USDA monies will allow for the connection of 11 residences to the city's municipal water supply system. These residences are faced with depleted water supplies due to the drought conditions.

"The City of Cambridge appreciates the USDA agreeing with the importance of funding this project," stated Mayor of Cambridge Mark Harpst. "Eleven residences will be able to enjoy the benefits of having water again. The City is also pleased to welcome these people into the City limits of Cambridge."

All 11 residences will be annexed into the corporate limits of the city. The majority of the residences are located on the east side of Cambridge along Highway 6 and 34, adjacent to corporate limits. The affected households have experienced a significant decline in the quantity of water pumped from their individual private wells with some rendered inoperable due to the drought conditions. Water use is managed to keep the wells from pumping dry due to their limited pumping capacity. As a result, non-potable uses such as for laundry, bathing, irrigation, and washing vehicles have had to be curtailed or not done at all.

Effects of the declining water supply are evidenced by situations such as the discontinuance of a shared well between two households due to the limited amounts of water available. Wells being dry and residents resorting to hauling water. One household developed a well but it had to be located approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ miles away from their home due to the limited aquifer in the area.

"The proposed project will connect the affected residences to the city's municipal water supply system that will require the installation of 11,700 linear feet of water main, 5 fire hydrants and 11 service connections," stated Roberta Mues, rural development specialist for USDA Rural Development. "Water is vital to the well being of households and this project will restore a dependable supply of quality water in ample quantities to the residents who are currently facing water shortages."

USDA funding was provided through the USDA Rural Development Water and Wastewater Grant program and the Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant program.

For additional information contact Roberta Mues at 1202 S. Cottonwood North Platte, Neb. 69101; bert.mues@ne.usda.gov or phone (308) 534-2360, (402) 437-5093 (TDY). Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.

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